

IN THE UNITED STATES COURT OF FEDERAL CLAIMS

OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS

(Filed: August 9, 2006)

DO NOT PUBLISH

LAURIE VIDAVER,)	
)	
Petitioner,)	
)	
v.)	No. 99-0499V
)	Attorneys' Fees and Costs
SECRETARY OF)	
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,)	
)	
Respondent.)	
)	

DECISION ON ATTORNEYS' FEES AND COSTS¹

Petitioner, Laurie Vidaver (Ms. Vidaver), seeks an award of attorneys' fees and attorneys' costs for an action that she pursued under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program (Program).² In an amended application for attorneys' fees and attorneys' costs that she filed on August 7, 2006, Ms. Vidaver requests \$10,624.88. *See Amended Application for Attorneys' Fees & Costs (Amended Fee Petition),* filed August 7, 2006. Ms. Vidaver represents that she did not incur any personal expenses as defined by General Order No. 9. *See Amended Fee Petition, Attachment (Retainer Statement).* Respondent does not object. *See Respondent's Status Report,* filed August 8, 2006.

¹ As provided by Vaccine Rule 18(b), each party has 14 days within which to request redaction "of any information furnished by that party (1) that is trade secret or commercial or financial information and is privileged or confidential, or (2) that are medical files and similar files the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of privacy." Vaccine Rule 18(b). Otherwise, "the entire decision" will be available to the public. *Id.*

² The statutory provisions governing the Vaccine Program are found in 42 U.S.C. §§ 300aa-10 *et seq.* For convenience, further reference will be to the relevant section of 42 U.S.C.

Ms. Vidaver did not receive Program compensation. Nevertheless, the statute enacting the Program accords discretion to the special master to “award an amount of compensation to cover” Ms. Vidaver’s “reasonable attorneys’ fees and other costs” as long as “the special master or court determines that” Ms. Vidaver possessed “a reasonable basis for the claim” and that Ms. Vidaver filed the petition “in good faith.” § 300aa-15(e)(1); *see, e.g., Di Roma v. Secretary of HHS*, 1993 WL 496981 (Fed. Cl. Spec. Mstr. Nov. 18, 1993). As the United States Supreme Court has cautioned in cases involving other fee-shifting schemes, the special master’s “discretion is not without limit.” *Blanchard v. Bergeron*, 489 U.S. 87, 89 n.1 (1989). Thus, absent “special circumstances,” the special master “should ordinarily” award attorneys’ fees and costs to an unsuccessful petitioner. *Id.*, citing *Newman v. Piggie Park Enterprises*, 390 U.S. 400, 402 (1968); *Hensley v. Eckerhart*, 461 U.S. 424, 429 (1983).

The special master has considered carefully Ms. Vidaver’s Amended Fee Petition. The special master determines that the Amended Fee Petition is appropriate. Therefore, in the absence of a motion for review filed under RCFC Appendix B, the clerk of court shall enter judgment in Ms. Vidaver’s favor for \$10,624.88. The judgment shall reflect that Ms. Vidaver’s attorney of record, Clifford J. Shoemaker, Esq. (Mr. Shoemaker), may collect \$10,624.88 from Ms. Vidaver.³

s/John F. Edwards
John F. Edwards
Special Master

³ Under Vaccine Rule 11(a), the parties may expedite entry of judgment by filing a joint notice renouncing the right to seek review.